

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** September 25, 2014

**Meeting No.:** 193

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**Project:** Phase 1 Crossroads School Classroom Building

**Phase:** Continued Schematic

**Location:** Living Classrooms Campus, Dock Street between Caroline Street and the proposed Central Avenue Bridge

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**PRESENTATION:**

Anthony Cataldo introduced the project team. For the benefit of panelists who were unable to attend the August 14<sup>th</sup> presentation, Living Classrooms Foundation Vice President Bill Cunningham provided a synopsis of the Living Classrooms mission, the program adjustments for this site, and a discussion of funding for the project.

Matt Poe, AIA provided a refresher on site context and design drivers, prior design, and proposed modifications. The proposed design has been modified to address panel comments from the August presentation, including:

1. Re-siting the building mass with a shift to the south in order to strengthen the Will Street crosswalk connection.
2. Further development of the west wall grade adjustments and step seating.
3. Refinement to the end towers and wall panel system. The architecture is contemporary and expresses the masonry walled classroom divisions. Living walls are placed on the more sculptural bracketed ends.
4. Future phases are blocked into the studies.

**PANEL COMMENTS:**

The panel appreciated the effort to address comments. The panel noted the following concerns:

1. General
  - a. In light of the density of the Harbor Point development south of the site across Dock Street, the panel suggested that the Foundation consider increasing the size of this building by adding one or two additional stories, potentially as unfinished shell space. In the event that the Foundation could not raise additional money, the panel suggested that the Foundation consider designing infrastructure to accommodate future vertical expansion for one to two additional floors.
2. Site
  - a. The panel praised repositioning the building to provide a stronger visual terminus the Willis Street axis.
  - b. The panel suggested further study of the site in this area to provide a receptive entry court at the Dock Street and Willis Street entrance.

- c. Provide preliminary landscape plans for both the Dock Street frontage and the interior court.
3. Building Design
- a. The panel noted that the building still appears to turn its back to Dock Street. Consider reducing the 7' high solid wall areas to create a stronger visual connection with additional glazing/translucency.
  - b. The panel suggested that proposed structural and skin systems lack connection to this site's historic boatbuilding and industrial uses, and to similar activities conducted at the school. The panel asked the design team to consider opportunities to include those material and visual cues as the design is finalized.
  - c. While the bookends are lighter than the prior submittal, the panel believes that there is no hierarchy since they are very close in visual weight. The end bay at the Willis Street terminus should be studied further to create some visual weight and to assure its predominance.

**PANEL ACTION:**

The Panel recommends the approval of the Schematic Design, with further development and response to comments with the Final submission.

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**Attending:**

Matthew Poe – Matthew Poe Architect  
Bill Cunningham – Living Classrooms Foundation  
Klaus Philipsen – Arch Plan Inc.  
Kevin Litten – BBJ  
Natalie Sherman – Baltimore Sun

UDARP Panel Members – Dr. Judith Meany, Messrs. Richard Burns, Gary Bowden and David Haresign\*

Planning Department- Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa, Laurie Feinberg, Tamara Woods